

# **EXHIBIT E**

**Massachusetts**  
**Consolidated State Plan**  
**Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**  
**October 2024**

Original Plan Approved September 2017



**U.S. Department of Education**  
OMB Number: 1810-0576  
Expiration Date: November 30, 2019

revision of the English language arts and literacy curriculum frameworks, mathematics curriculum frameworks, history and social sciences curriculum frameworks, arts curriculum frameworks, and world languages curriculum frameworks.

- **Priority 4:** Increase student access to the supports they need to be successful in achieving the standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

We will advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Implementing more effective programs to serve the students farthest behind.** The Every Student Succeeds Act has provided us with many opportunities to improve results for student groups that have historically struggled to meet proficiency standards, in particular, students from low income backgrounds, English learners, and students receiving special education services. Through grant funding, prioritized access to resources, and program initiatives at the state and local levels, we will accelerate the improvement of our lower performing students.
- **Implementing the next-generation Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test and supporting districts as they develop common assessments.** The state upgraded the MCAS to better measure the critical thinking skills students need for success in the 21st century. The new test built upon the best aspects of the MCAS assessments that have served the Commonwealth well for the past two decades. All tests are now administered entirely via computer, following a transition to online testing that began in 2017.

### ***3) Support social-emotional learning, health, and safety***

Academic and social-emotional skills and competencies are mutually reinforcing. Thus, preparing all students for success must include attending to their social emotional and health development. We will accomplish this by promoting systems and strategies that foster safe, positive, healthy, culturally competent, and inclusive learning environments that address students' varied needs in order to improve educational outcomes for all students.

We will continue to advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Promoting social and emotional learning (SEL).** DESE will continue to promote and help strengthen social-emotional competencies and wellness in students and adults across the state, with the goal of creating conditions that support statewide implementation of SEL programs and practices in preschool through high school so that all students can develop skills to thrive in and beyond school. Participation in the Collaborating States Initiative facilitated by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), helps inform DESE practices and supports for the field. Examples of current initiatives include an [SEL and Mental Health grant program](#); SEL, health & wellness focused [professional development](#); and an [SEL and Mental Health MTSS Academy](#) to support school and district teams with learning and implementation efforts across the state. A [Social and Emotional Learning Indicator System \(SELIS\) pilot project](#) is also underway. Many DESE guidance documents also help further SEL goals, for instance the revised versions of the [Educator Effectiveness Teacher and School Administrator Rubrics](#), [Culturally Responsive Social-Emotional Competency Development](#), and [Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Grade 1–3 Resources](#).
- **Ensuring a positive school climate and providing safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments for all students.** We provide training, technical assistance, access to resources and guidance to schools and districts as they consider using Title IV, Part A and other sources of funds in

this realm. We also continue to support initiatives and resources such as the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection Tool, Rethinking Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, and Substance Use and Abuse Prevention. In addition, we encourage districts to increase student access to a broad, well-rounded curriculum that includes physical education (as required by state law in each grade) and health. DESE also partners with districts to administer Views of Climate and Learning (VOCAL) student surveys. The surveys and accompanying guidance resources are designed to provide schools with local and statewide information on student perceptions of three dimensions of school climate (engagement, safety, and environment).

- **Promoting family engagement** as a key lever that contributes to positive outcomes for students. DESE continues to provide training, technical assistance, resources, and guidance to schools and partners on effective family engagement strategies that promote the development of strong working relationships with families and appropriate community organizations to support students' success. Foundational resources that guide this work include the cross-agency [Family Engagement Framework](#) and the [Family, School and Community Partnership Fundamentals Self-Assessment](#). Examples of current initiatives include collaborating with the Federation for Children with Special Needs and other partners on the Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Center, hosting the first annual Summit "Better Together: Strengthening Family School Partnerships" with more than 400 participants in Fall 2022, hosting quarterly networking meetings for family and community engagement specialists from across the state.

#### *4) Turn around the lowest performing districts and schools*

The state's lowest performing schools require evidence-based interventions and strong educators to support rapid improvement in the schools' ability to prepare their students for success. Since 2010, Massachusetts has used strong authorities codified in state law to implement a system of identification, support, and intervention in the state's lowest performing schools and districts. The state law emphasizes sufficient autonomy and flexibility to empower school leadership to make key decisions regarding staffing, resources, and schedules within a context of accountability for results. Under ESSA, we will continue to support and partner with districts as they strive to improve underperforming schools. Where districts are unable to implement effective improvement initiatives, we will utilize our authority under state statute to intervene.

Since passage of An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap in 2010, the Department has evolved efforts over time to best serve students in the state's highest need schools and districts--that is, those districts and schools determined by the state's accountability system as focused/targeted and broad/comprehensive support. Since 2018, our accountability and assistance model has integrated state and federal requirements to ensure we are focusing assistance efforts on schools identified as comprehensive and targeted support, as well as the lowest performing 10 percent of schools and schools with low performing student groups.

The Department's Center for School and District Partnership (CSDP) and Office of Strategic Transformation (OST) prioritize assistance for focused/targeted and broad/comprehensive support. Assistance efforts span a wide array of activities and levers, including direct technical assistance from Department staff and its approved partners, grant funding, toolkits and guidance, research-based resources, and professional development. These efforts are designed to enhance school and district capacity to effectively and proactively use proven instructional and supportive practices to boost and sustain rapid gains in student achievement. Direct technical assistance from DESE staff includes supporting districts to set equity-focused priorities aimed at gap-closing, supporting the development and sustenance of school- and district-level